

Message Text

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ORIGIN PRS-01

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TO USDEL SECRETARY PRIORITY

UNCLAS STATE 039039 TOSEC 020168

FOR CARTER FROM S/PRS

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SOPN (VANCE, CYRUS R.)

SUBJECT: RESTON COLUMN, SUNDAY, 20 FEBRUARY

NO. 28

HEREWITH FULL TEXT OF JAMES RESTON COLUMN ENTITLED,
"THE SAKHAROV LETTER". BEGIN: JIMMY CARTER HAS ADJUSTED
TO WASHINGTON, BUT WASHINGTON HASN'T YET ADJUSTED TO HIM.
HE KEEPS DOING AS HE LIKES.

HE STARTLES THE ESTABLISHMENT BY ADVOCATING MARRIAGE, WALK-
ING TO WORK, WEARING SWEATERS ON TV AND -- HIS LATEST "OUT-
RAGE" -- WRITING LETTERS TO DISSIDENTS IN THE SOVIET UNION.

THIS IS NOT WHAT IS CALLED HERE "STANDARD OPERATING PRO-
CEDURE," AND HIS LETTER TO SAKHAROV, THE DISTINGUISHED
SOVIET SCIENTISTS, HAS SENT A POLITE SHUDDER THROUGH ENTIRE
DIPLOMATIC FRATERNITY. BEST THEY CAN SAY FOR HIM IS THAT
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MAYBE IT WAS AN INNOCENT MISTAKE OF INEXPEDIENCE.

NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM TRUTH. JUST TO CLARIFY SAK-
HAROV INCIDENT, TWO POINTS OUGHT TO BE MADE: FIRST, CARTER
LETTER TO SAKHAROV MAY HAVE BEEN A BLUNDER, AS MANY PEOPLE
BELIEVE, BUT IT WAS NO ACCIDENT. AND SECOND WHILE SOVIET

AMBASSADOR IN WASH, DOBRYNIN, HAS BEEN DENOUNCING LETTER AS AN IMPERTINENT INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS OF SOVIET UNION, HE HAS AT SAME TIME BEEN CARRYING ON PRIVATE TALKS WITH U.S. OFFICIALS ON ARMS CONTROL, TRADE, AND OTHER MATTERS.

BRZEZINSKI, HEAD OF CARTER'S NSC, CONFIRMS THESE POINTS. "THERE WAS NOTHING INADVERTENT ABOUT CARTER LETTER," HE TOLD THIS REPORTER. "IT WAS THOUGHT THROUGH, AND DISCUSSED WITH RESPONSIBLE OFFICIALS AT NSC AND STATE DEPT BEFORE PRESIDENT MADE HIS "PRUDENTIAL RESPONSE."

"IMAGINE," BRZEZINSKI SAID, "PRESIDENT OF U.S., WHO ON HIS INAUGURATION DAY SPEAKS OF HIS DEDICATION TO HUMAN RIGHTS, RECEIVING A LETTER FROM A NOBEL PEACE PRIZE WINNER RESIDING, SAY, IN CHILE OR SOUTH KOREA. WOULD HE IGNORE IT? I THINK THE ANSWER'S CLEARLY NO.

"SO AFTER DUE REFLECTION," BRZEZINSKI CONTINUED, "PRESIDENT WROTE HIM BACK A PRIVATE LETTER -- VERY GENERAL, RESTATING IN VERY GENERAL TERMS HIS CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS, NOT POINTED AT ANY PARTICULAR NATION -- DELIBERATELY GENERALIZED AS A PRIVATE COMMUNICATION, NOT TO BE RELEASED BY US.

"IT WAS CONSIDERED THAT SAKHAROV MIGHT RELEASE IT (NO RESTRICTIONS WERE PLACED BY PRESIDENT ON THIS POINT). ALTERNATIVE WAS TO MAKE A PUBLIC RESPONSE, WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN FAR MORE POINTED AND PROVOCATIVE. ANOTHER POSSIBILITY WAS NOT TO RESPOND AT ALL, WHICH IF YOU CONSIDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES, WAS SCARCELY REASONABLE."

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CUMSTANCES, WAS SCARCELY REASONABLE."

BRZEZINSKI DISCUSSED ALL THIS AT GREAT LENGTH WITH SOVIET AMBASSADOR, AND ALSO QUESTION OF FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS ON CONTROL OF NUCLEAR AND OTHER MILITARY ARMS. "ON THE FUNDAMENTALS," HE SAID, "WE ARE MAKING AND HAVE BEEN MAKING AN EFFORT TO GET DISCUSSIONS GOING -- TO MOVE ON SALT AND MBFR AND TO WIDEN RANGE OF DISCUSSION. IT HASN'T SURFACED YET, BUT I THINK IT WILL PRODUCE DIVIDENDS BEFORE TOO LONG.

THIS IS OFFICIAL EXPLANATION OF SAKHAROV INCIDENT, IF NOT JUSTIFICATION, FOR IT RAISES SOME AWKWARD QUESTIONS. WILL IT REALLY HELP SAKHAROV AND OTHER FREEDOM FIGHTERS IN SOVIET UNION AND OTHER REPRESSIVE COMMUNIST COUNTRIES? HAVING ENCOURAGED SAKHAROV TO INVOKE PRESTIGE OF WHITE HOUSE IN DEFENSE OF DISSIDENTS, HOW WILL HE RESPOND TO OTHERS WHO WILL NOW COME FORWARD CRYING TO HIM FOR HELP, NOT ONLY IN SOVIET UNION AND EASTERN EUROPE, BUT IN DICTA-

TORIAL ALLIED NATIONS OF LATIN AMERICA AND IN CRITICAL

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STRATEGIC COUNTRIES LIKE PHILIPPINES AND SOUTH KOREA --
WHERE REPRESSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS REPULSIVE TO AMERICAN
PRINCIPLES? IS THERE A POLICY ON THIS THAT HAS BEEN
"THOUGHT THROUGH" -- INCLUDING WHAT TO DO IF IT LEADS TO
MORE RATHER THAN LESS REPRESSION?

HE DOESN'T PRETEND THAT HE HAS A WORLDWIDE POLICY FOR
RELIEVING SUFFERING OF HUMAN RACE, OR THAT HE CAN RESPOND
PERSONALLY TO EVERY CRY FOR HELP, BUT HE IS NOT GOING TO
IGNORE PROBLEM EITHER, OR ASSUME THAT A LETTER TO SAKHAROV
WILL END SEARCH FOR CONTROL OF MILITARY ARMS.

HIS ATTITUDE IS THAT HE WILL DO BEST HE CAN, EVEN IF IT'S
NOT MUCH, TO HELP REPRESSED PEOPLE, AND HIS ASSUMPTION IS
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THAT IF SOVIET UNION CAN BE DIVERTED TO A LETTER TO SAKHAROV
FROM TRYING TO GET CONTROL OF WORLD ARMS TRAFFIC, MAYBE
AN ARMS AGREEMENT WOULD NOT MEAN ALL THAT MUCH.

SO HE GOES ON DOING WHAT COMES NATURALLY, BALANCING BOOKS
EVERY DAY, AND RESPONDING TO EACH PROBLEM AS IT ARISES.
IT'S NOT NORMAL WAY AROUND HERE -- THOUGH IT USED TO BE IN
DAYS OF TEDDY ROOSEVELT AND WOODROW WILSON -- BUT IT'S
HIS WAY, AND WASHINGTON IS PROBABLY GOING TO HAVE TO GET
USED TO IT.

FOR CARTER IS OBVIOUSLY A DETERMINED MAN ON THIS QUESTION
OF HUMAN RIGHTS. HE IS NOT ONLY WRITING ABROAD ABOUT
IT, BUT LAYING DOWN RULES IN HIS OWN DEPTS TO SEE THAT
HIS ADMINISTRATION IS FAITHFUL TO PRINCIPLES HE DEFINED
IN HIS LETTER TO SAKHAROV.

THIS IS ALMOST A THEOLOGICAL POINT WITH CARTER. HE CAN'T
STAMP OUT SIN IN THE WORLD, BUT HE KEEPS ON PRAYING.

HARTMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 20-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
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Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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From: STATE
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Review Release Date: n/a
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Subject: RESTON COLUMN, SUNDAY, 20 FEBRUARY NO. 28 HEREWITH FULL TEXT OF JAMES RESTON COLUMN ENTITLED
TAGS: SOPN, PPDC, US, UR, (VANCE, CYRUS R), (CARTER, JIMMY), (SAKHAROV, ANDREY)
To: SECRETARY
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